

**GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**  
**for the NIST**  
**PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE PROGRAM-COMMUNICATIONS**  
**TECHNOLOGY DIVISION**

**Undergraduate, Graduate and Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships**

Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 278g-1(a) and (c); 15 U.S.C. § 272(b) and (c), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has established the Professional Research Experience Program-Communications Technology Laboratory (PREP-CTL). PREP-CTL provides undergraduate students, graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows with fellowship opportunities and financial assistance to obtain laboratory experience within the NIST Communications Technology Laboratory (CTL) in Gaithersburg, Maryland. The recipients will work with NIST to foster collaborative research relationships among NIST staff, undergraduate/graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and the students' academic institutions.

PREP-CTL seeks to encourage the growth and progress of science and engineering in the United States, including the encouragement of women and minority students seeking to further their professional development, and to nurture students and post-doctoral fellows considered to be potential future NIST employees. NIST implements PREP-CTL by entering into cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education (hereinafter referred to generically as "institutions" or "the Institution") for the purpose of awarding research fellowships to undergraduate and graduate students, and to post-doctoral fellows employed by or affiliated with the institutions (hereinafter referred to as "PREP-CTL Participants" or "participants"). These fellowships include a salary, stipend, or other payments; and, for students, full tuition payment at the in-state rate. NIST provides fellowship funds to the institutions, which administer the program in collaboration with NIST.

NIST and each Institution participating in PREP-CTL agree to carry out their respective responsibilities under this program as identified in the terms below. They will also identify, negotiate, and implement effective methods of sharing information in an efficient, courteous, and timely manner.

**A. Institution Responsibilities**

1. The Institution shall manage and implement the PREP-CTL Program, in coordination with NIST.
2. The Institution shall provide points of contact for an Institution PREP-CTL Coordinator, who will serve as a single point of contact for Institution staff, applicants and participants, and the NIST Program Officer (see Section B.2. below). The Institution's PREP-CTL Coordinator shall coordinate with the

NIST Program Officer to assist students and Institution staff in implementing the program and resolving any difficulties that may arise.

3. The Institution shall manage a selection process for PREP-CTL participants that includes, at a minimum, the following elements:
  - a. The Institution shall publicize the PREP-CTL program and recruit applicants. This shall include providing information about the availability of PREP-CTL fellowships on a periodic basis to the Institution's undergraduate and graduate science and engineering departments.
  - b. The Institution's PREP-CTL Coordinator shall work with the Institution's faculty and NIST to identify research subject matters of current interest to NIST that are complementary with the Institution's academic programs, determine subject areas for proposed research, and publicize these potential PREP-CTL research areas accordingly.
  - c. The Institution PREP-CTL Coordinator shall be responsive to calls and personal visits from undergraduate/graduate students and post-doctoral fellows interested in a PREP-CTL fellowship and explain the program requirements.
  - d. The Institution shall distribute application forms to interested students and post-doctoral fellows, and receive and process the application forms. The Institution shall determine whether applicants are eligible to participate in the fellowship program based on the requirements in Section C below, and select PREP-CTL participants in coordination with NIST based on the ability and academic performance of the student or post-doctoral fellow, and the merit and appropriateness of the proposed work in light of ongoing research at NIST and the student's academic programs or the post-doctoral fellow's program for the Institution.
4. The Institution shall hire PREP-CTL participants as employees, or otherwise control the means and manner of the participants' activities. In addition, the Institution shall:
  - a. Provide reasonable on-site supervision for PREP-CTL participants as needed.
  - b. Ensure that participants understand their responsibility for complying with all applicable NIST safety, security, information technology access, and other similar policies and procedures applicable to guest researchers at NIST sites.
  - c. Be responsible for obtaining visa applications and required documentation for Foreign Guest Researchers.
5. The Institution shall control the terms of a PREP-CTL participant's tenure and schedule, and shall pay the participant's salaries or stipends accordingly. A PREP-CTL participant's tenure is the period in which the participant's research is performed and for which the Institution has authorized salary and

tuition payments. It includes periods of full-time research and independent study, whether or not the Institution is in session, as well as any customary short vacation periods. The length of a participant's tenure is determined by the Institution and must be consistent with the proposed budget and scope of work approved under the award, including any amendments. The minimum period of tenure for undergraduate participants shall ordinarily be one academic term (one semester or one quarter). If funding allows and the Institution and NIST agree, undergraduate participants may be offered renewable tenure periods in increments of one academic term. The Institution may renew an undergraduate participant's tenure as long as the student is making adequate progress toward a degree in a curriculum the Institution and NIST determine to be relevant to this program; undergraduate participants' tenure may not ordinarily exceed five years. The minimum period of tenure for graduate student and post-doctoral participants shall ordinarily be one full year. The Institution's renewal of a graduate student participant's tenure may not ordinarily exceed six years of the graduate student's progress toward a degree in a curriculum which the Institution and NIST determine to be relevant to this program. No tenure restrictions will be applied to post-doctoral participants.

6. The Institution shall supervise the participants' research and evaluate their performance. The Institution shall appoint an instructor of record or faculty advisor for this purpose for each participant. The Institution shall coordinate with NIST each participant's research, including any proposed changes to a participant's research, to ensure the research conducted by participants is and remains consistent with NIST program objectives. The Institution may, at its discretion, terminate a participant's participation in PREP-CTL prior to the completion of the participant's tenure if it determines that the participant is not making satisfactory academic progress.
7. The Performance (Technical) Reports should include a summary statement of the progress made by each participant.
8. The award period will be for up to two years from the date the award begins, consistent with the multi-year funding policy as further described in the Multi-Year Award and Funding Limitations Special Award Condition. The Institution shall submit supplemental applications during the year if it seeks to revise the scope of work and budget for the award by adding or removing participants from the program. Any proposed supplemental applications shall include budgets with current in-state tuition rates, and a proposed overhead rate. The Institution shall facilitate travel arrangements for PREP-CTL participants in carrying out their PREP-CTL assignments.
9. The Institution shall ensure that its Data Management Plan (DMP) complies at all times with the requirements set forth in NIST Policy 5700.00 and Order 5701.00, available at <http://www.nist.gov/data>. The Institution shall further

ensure that all data generation, data preservation, and data sharing/publication activities that occur as a result of this award comply with the Institution's DMP at all times. Revisions to the DMP must be included as part of the first Performance (Technical) Report submitted to NIST subsequent to the date on which the DMP is revised.

## **B. NIST Responsibilities**

1. This program is funded through a cooperative agreement for up to two years from the date the award begins, consistent with the multi-year funding policy as further described in the Multi-Year Award and Funding Limitations Special Award Condition. NIST will be substantially involved in the implementation of the cooperative agreement. See the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act, 31 USC §. 6305, and the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, at 2 C.F.R. Part 200. NIST shall collaborate with the Institution on the scope of work, as described further in the remainder of Section B of these Terms and Conditions and consistent with 2 C.F.R. Part 200.
2. NIST shall provide a Program Officer for PREP-CTL that serves as a single point of contact for NIST to coordinate the PREP-CTL Program with the Institution's PREP-CTL Coordinator (see Section A.2. above), the Institutions students and staff, and NIST research advisors. . In addition, the NIST Program Officer shall work with the NIST Grants Officer to maintain current, accurate, and thorough administrative records regarding PREP-CTL.
3. NIST shall provide information about the availability of PREP-CTL fellowships to the Institution's PREP-CTL Coordinator, and assist the Institution with publicity and recruiting.
4. The NIST Program Officer shall work with NIST scientists and engineers, the Institution's PREP-CTL coordinator, and the Institution's faculty to identify research topics of mutual interest that are suitable for PREP-CTL participant application.
5. NIST shall provide NIST staff and PREP-CTL participants any orientation, training, and required safety and other applicable instructions necessary to perform PREP-CTL research in their respective NIST laboratory environments.
6. NIST shall require PREP-CTL participants conducting research at a NIST laboratory to sign a Guest Researcher Agreement.
7. NIST shall collaborate with the Institution by assisting PREP-CTL participants with their research projects, coordinating with the participant's instructor of

record/faculty advisor regarding the participant's progress, and approving changes in the research projects described in the participant agreements, consistent with NIST program objectives and Section C.6 below.

8. NIST shall review supplemental proposals the Institution submits. NIST may accept any such proposal, negotiate changes, or decline to accept the proposal, consistent with the Multi-Year Award and Funding Limitations Special Award Condition for this award. All supplemental amendments to this award are contingent upon the Institution's satisfactory performance, continued relevance to NIST program objectives, and the availability of funds from NIST.
9. NIST shall have no hiring, firing, or other terminating authority over PREP-CTL participants. Any issues related to performance or conduct in the laboratory involving PREP-CTL participants shall be immediately reported to the Institution faculty advisor for the participant and the Institution PREP-CTL Coordinator.

#### **C. Requirements for Undergraduate/Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows to Participate in PREP-CTL**

1. Undergraduate and graduate PREP-CTL participants must be accepted for enrollment for academic credit by the Institution and remain affiliated with the Institution during the term of their participation in the PREP-CTL program. The participation of undergraduates and graduate students in the PREP-CTL program may be extended after graduation only as long as necessary to complete research projects started by the student while affiliated with the Institution. Post-docs must be affiliated with the Institution consistent with these General Terms and Conditions during the full terms of their participation in PREP-CTL.
2. Undergraduate and graduate PREP-CTL participants must maintain adequate progress toward a degree in a curriculum related to the NIST mission and should maintain a 3.0 cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA). If a student's cumulative GPA goes below 3.0 during the period of participation in the program, continuation in the PREP-CTL program is ordinarily provisional on the student raising the cumulative GPA to 3.0 during the next academic term. Extenuating circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
3. PREP-CTL participants may not be employed by NIST in any capacity while participating in the PREP-CTL program.
4. PREP-CTL participants may carry out research at the NIST laboratories, the Institution's facilities, or any other site agreeable to the Institution and NIST.

5. A PREP-CTL participant proposing changes in his or her research program must obtain approval for the changes from his or her instructor of record or faculty advisor in consultation with NIST.
6. Failure of a PREP-CTL participant to complete the terms of his/her PREP-CTL participant agreement without prior approval from the Institution, in coordination with NIST, constitutes resignation of the participant and will result in forfeiture of all remaining tenure.
7. Serving as a PREP-CTL participant does not obligate the participant, NIST, or the U.S. Government in any way with regard to future employment or service of any kind.
8. PREP-CTL participants are expected to take part in workshops or other activities designed to support their professional and education goals.